Group Care Practice
with Children
and Young People Revisited

Part II

> *Group care centers are established to provide a range of living, learning, treatment, and supervisory opportunities for children and young people who, for a variety of reasons, need alternative, supplementary, or substitute care. It is important, therefore, that group care centres establish an organizational climate, ethos, or culture of caring that is consistent with these objectives. This is achieved through internal organizational design, administrative routines, maintaining the physical environment, and support for staff team functioning, including attention to specific work methods.*

KEYWORDS. Group care, residential care, residential treatment, group homes, youth work, youthwork, group work, at-risk youth

> *Research has documented important interplays between the diagnostic characteristics of residents in group care centers and the functioning of staff teams re-*

sponsible for the delivery of services. Factors that impact on the quality of working life satisfactions and frustrations are variable over time and may originate from within the team, the resident group, the service organization, or the social policy environment external to the centre. Outcomes may draw team members together or promote destructive levels of turbulence, maladaptation, or anti-task behavior with significant consequences for all concerned.

SECTION 3: ORGANISATIONAL INFLUENCES ON PRACTICE

Traditional clinical professions, as well as the emerging child and youth care profession, have focused primarily on the welfare of identified clients. While the personal and professional well-being of practitioners has long been addressed in the training and supervision of human service workers, serious efforts to identify problems confronting these workers and potential consequences for both staff and residents are comparatively recent. This classic contribution to the literature highlights ways in which child and youth care has provided leadership on the management of occupational stress in the human services.

Patterns of career development in the field of child and youth care are reexamined in relation to roles that involve working directly with children in specific settings as well as in relation to roles that involve working indirectly in support of children through working with other adults, be these parents, other caregivers or professionals. Other career roles involve working in support of human service systems that impact on the care of children and young people and influence family welfare. Finally, some career roles involve working at the macro level to formulate policies that shape the culture of caring communities to support the health and well-being of children. Each career role presents important challenges and offers valuable opportunities for influencing the lives of children, young people and their families.

For the past two decades, economic influences have significantly impacted the provision of health and welfare services for children, young people and their families in communities around the world. The dynamic of cost has reshaped both the nature and provision of group care services, promoting de-institutionalization and transforming the nature of caring services offered in local communities. In a reappraisal of themes identified in his seminal contribution more than two decades ago, this leading authority looks back at key themes impacting on the economics of social care that shape group care services for the new millennium.

KEYWORDS. Group care, residential care, residential treatment, group homes, youth work, youthwork, group work, at-risk youth, accounting, cost of care, management and human services

Attention is drawn to important themes thought likely to influence the continuing development of group care services for children and young people in the decade ahead. These include a poorly educated workforce, autonomous training, multi-disciplinary approaches, centres of excellence, diversified programs, new trends and issues shaping the future, and group care practice and the law.

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